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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Expert workshop on the impact of existing strategies and initiatives to address child, early and forced marriage

Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 29/8 on strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage. In that resolution, the Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize an expert workshop to review and discuss the impact of existing strategies and initiatives to address child, early and forced marriage and to make recommendations for further action by States and the international community towards the full implementation of human rights obligations in that regard. The present report contains a summary of the discussions that took place during the expert workshop, which took place in Geneva on 21 and 22 October 2016.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 29/8, the Human Rights Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize an expert workshop to review and discuss the impact of existing strategies and initiatives to address child, early and forced marriage and prepare a report on the deliberations held during the workshop to be submitted to the Council at its thirty-fifth session. The workshop took place on 21 and 22 October 2016. About 30 experts from 17 different countries attended, including participants from government institutions, civil society organizations, research institutions, United Nations entities, the judiciary and national human rights institutions, as well as traditional leaders, parliamentarians and United Nations independent human rights experts. The list of participants at the workshop and the background document can be found on the web page of the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.[1]

2. The present report includes a summary of the views shared and recommendations made by participants. The thematic areas in the four sections below were discussed on the basis of existing guidance by human rights mechanisms and the findings and recommendations contained in the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage (A/HRC/26/22 and Corr.1) and the report of the Secretary-General on child, early and forced marriage (A/71/253).[2]

II. Impact of existing legislative measures

3. The experts stressed the need for different legal frameworks to address child and forced marriage.

4. Experts also stressed that increasing focus is being placed on the adoption of laws that prohibit child marriage, with a minimum age set at 18 years for boys and girls. However, there are persisting challenges in implementing child marriage legislation in plural legal systems. The enactment of laws applicable to all girls regardless of their personal and religious status was mentioned as being critical in order to overcome the disparities in marriage provisions in plural legal systems. In Kenya, for example, the 2014 Marriage Act sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 regardless of the personal status or the faith of the child and encompasses all personal status and supersedes religious and customary laws. It was stressed that constitutional reform can be an opportunity to ensure legal protection against child and forced marriage.

5. Where compulsory birth registration is provided by law, it has helped to track the ages of people being married in traditional or religious bodies and contributed to protecting girls. In Bangladesh, the use of smart cards and digital devices for identity cards to track the age of those who married in traditional bodies had a positive impact in that regard. Accurately assessing the impact of birth registration within communities requires consistent data-collection systems and strong monitoring processes that are often not provided for in the law or do not exist.

6. Participants agreed that making child marriage a criminal offence helps to ensure adequate protection for victims, in particular if the law foresees the issuance of protection orders. Also, in some contexts, the criminalization of child marriage had empowered professionals working with children to have open discussions about the issue, where they had previously felt restrained by concerns of being perceived as insensitive to cultural specificities, especially when the practice affects minority groups. However, it was also stressed that legislation criminalizing child marriage places the burden of proof overwhelmingly upon girls and women and, in practice, a lack of protection measures for those who report such practices often results into withdrawals of complaints. Such reporting

[1] www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/VAW.aspx.

[2] See the background document for a summary of relevant guidance and summary under each topic.

rarely leads to criminal prosecutions. When criminal prosecution does take place, it can be lengthy, costly and lead to further victimization. Furthermore, child survivors were reported to have dropped cases for fear of criminal sanctions against their parents and family members.

7. It was recognized that the onus to initiate a procedure to declare a child, early or forced marriage null and void falls mainly on the girls or women in question. However, they are often unable to act owing to an overall lack of awareness of the procedure or the unavailability of legal aid to support them in the process.

8. The need to transfer the burden of reporting a risk of or an actual child or forced marriage from the survivors to other individuals and professionals was repeatedly mentioned as a critical step. The obligation to report on social, education, religious or customary authorities, with clear sanctions for the failure to do so, had in some contexts been successful. It was also stressed that the criminalization of child marriage could result into the stigmatization of entire communities, and in some contexts alternative sanctions should be explored. For example, this could include administrative or pecuniary sanctions for local or religious leaders who attend or solemnize child marriage, or the acknowledgement of any actions by public officials to address child or forced marriage when they are considered for promotions.

9. Participants stressed the need for comprehensive approaches to legal reform, encompassing criminal and civil laws, to ensure adequate prevention of and redress for child and forced marriage. Legislation should address some of the factors that lead families to enter their children into a premature or forced marriage. Female genital mutilation, which in some contexts is the first step towards child marriage, should be prohibited. Discriminatory legislation limiting women's freedoms and rights and, as a result, their choices beyond marriage should also be eliminated. Efforts to address contradictions and loopholes in the legal framework were also stressed as critical. For example, legislation on statutory rape should not exempt married couples, as is currently the case in India. Legislation and policies preventing access to sexual and reproductive rights information and services for adolescents represent a barrier to efforts to prevent child marriage, for example, in contexts like Latin America, where the main driver of child marriage is unwanted pregnancies.

10. Legal provisions that result in excluding married girls and women from support should also be eliminated. Legal factors preventing women from seeking the annulment of marriage should also be addressed, such as laws providing that married girls need to wait until they reach a certain age to divorce or else they lose their rights to inheritance, which may leave no choice but to remain in the marriage.

11. It is of concern that legislative measures to prohibit child marriage are not adequately coupled with protective measures, remedies and reparations, as this prevents their successful enforcement. There is a need for better coordination of actions to prevent child marriage, protect victims and ensure their access to services and remedies. It is important for legislation to guide different government agencies so that all professionals who come into contact with girls at risk can work together to support them, otherwise there is a risk of inaction. Furthermore, it is important for legislation to specifically recognize the services to which victims of child and forced marriage should have access. Monitoring and evaluation of legislation was considered very weak in most countries, with no national coordinating body in place in most cases.

12. Experts stressed the importance of using the available legal framework in more effective ways to protect girls and women from child and forced marriage, including laws and provisions on sexual violence, domestic violence, child protection and witness protection.

13. The judiciary plays a key role in the proper enforcement of national and international legal frameworks to protect women and girls from child and forced marriage. For instance, in Niger, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, national courts

have significantly contributed to eliminating the practice, either by declaring as unconstitutional any provisions of laws on child marriage,[3] or by issuing protection orders as preventive measures for persons at risk. However, frequently, inadequate knowledge and application of the legislation by the judiciary represents an obstacle. In many places, the judiciary does not consistently apply constitutional or human rights guarantees to protect girls and women from child and forced marriage. In some contexts, the justice system is negligent in enforcing the law on child marriage within minority communities, such as the Roma community, on the pretext of respect for cultural practices. The need to assess judges' knowledge of national and international legislation on child and forced marriage prior to their confirmations was stressed as a good practice to address this obstacle.

14. Experts stressed how genuine and meaningful participation of stakeholders in law-making is inadequate. Legislation planned and implemented in a participatory and inclusive manner has the potential to capture the complex multifaceted nature of child marriage and better respond to the rights and needs of women and girls. For instance, involving girls at the outset of legislative initiatives and using them as transformative agents to challenge harmful laws have brought positive outcomes in Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In Kenya, as a constitutional requirement, public participation in law-making has allowed the involvement of influential actors into the drafting of the Child Marriage Act. To ensure a broad participation, mobilization should take place both at the national and grass-roots levels and involve different types of influencers and actors in the discussions, including researchers, politicians, judges and human rights activists.

15. The role of national human rights institutions in monitoring the existence of an adequate legal framework and its enforcement was stressed. The 2014 Kathmandu Call for Action to End Child Marriage supports monitoring the efforts of national human rights institutions to promote accountability for violations of rights resulting from child marriage.

16. Experts stressed the importance of subregional and regional policies and approaches to guide legislative efforts in the area of child and forced marriage.

17. More research on the issue of preventing the child and forced marriage of women and girls with dual nationality was needed, as well as more emphasis on how to protect the rights of girls in "informal unions". The need to monitor the impact of legislation in rural and urban areas was mentioned, including the actual capacities of girls and women to gain access to legal remedies.

III. Impact of existing policy measures

18. Experts referred to recent global and regional efforts to address child, early and forced marriage, including the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage and the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.[4] These programmes have encouraged the adoption of national policies and strategies. While the programmes are relatively new, there have been some efforts to assess their impact, for example, in countries such as Chad, the Gambia, Ghana, Mozambique, Nepal, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

19. A number of lessons have been learned from developing and implementing strategies on child and forced marriage. In general, they have led to clear progress in breaking taboos about the issues and garnering support for greater political will and civil society mobilization.

20. The process adopted in the development of national strategies, plans and policies has proved to have had a considerable impact on the relevance of their content and the chances of their successful impact. Strategies should be informed by mapping of hotspots and

[3] In July 2016, the High Court of the United Republic of Tanzania ruled that laws allowing boys and girls to marry at different ages, specifically allowing girls to marry under 18 years of age, were discriminatory and unconstitutional.

[4] Available from www.unicef.org/protection/57929_92681.html.

research into the drivers of child marriage in high-prevalence communities, as well as the triggers that have led some communities to abandon the practice. Policies and strategies must be designed with the participation of different sectors, including health, education, justice, social affairs and child protection, and of women, girls, their families, communities and religious leaders. This is essential to ensure that policies are contextualized and respond to the needs of women and girls in specific communities, and that there is the ownership necessary to ensure their implementation.

21. While the involvement of one particular minister — often for gender or education — to coordinate work across sectors has had limited impact, interministerial bodies set up with the ability to influence all ministerial departments have appeared to achieve better results. In Zambia, a body composed of ministers and chief executive officers coordinated the development of a comprehensive national plan that was then transformed into targeted interventions for each ministry. Ensuring adequate financial resources for the strategies was also highlighted as a serious challenge. Channelling the resources to reach the grass-roots communities and the groups concerned should be looked at as a priority, especially when rural and remote areas and poor urban settings are the most affected.

22. In different contexts, utilizing specific strategic entry points to address child marriage has been important in overcoming societal resistance to challenge the practice. For example, framing policies around the need to address obstetric fistula, ensure access to education, promote adolescent health, eliminate maternal mortality or tackle domestic violence have been used as opportunities to advance discussions on the elimination of child and forced marriage.

23. In terms of content, experts stressed the importance of strategies that are rights-based and address the root causes of child marriage, focusing on girls' and women's empowerment. While not all interventions need to be labelled specifically as addressing child and forced marriage, it is important to have clarity on the elements that successful strategies should encompass. Girls' access to quality education, in particular secondary education, is a key component. One expert recommended that education should be compulsory up to 18 years of age. National policies on education should address child marriage, which often represents one of the main obstacles for girls. Also, schools should be made safe spaces for girls, which is currently not the case in many contexts. Access to comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services have been found to be a critical component of successful strategies to address child marriage and protect the rights of girls in the context of marriage. Ensuring that once girls complete education they have employment opportunities is another key element of successful policies. Programmes such as cash transfers were considered successful, although they should be monitored to ensure that they have the intended impact in upholding women's and girls' rights, as research indicates this is not always the case. Policies and plans must further encompass efforts to challenge stereotypes and perceptions about the roles of girls in societies, as well as social norms about, inter alia, girls' sexuality and pregnancy outside marriage.

24. Experience shows that policies and plans need to include specific measures to reach the most marginalized girls and women. Programmes providing girls with smartphones, through which they can have easy access to information on available services, were found to be successful. The need for a greater focus on girls around the age of puberty was stressed to be essential for effective prevention strategies.

25. The need to work with and through civil society, as well as directly with girls, was repeatedly raised. Civil society actors, especially at the grass-roots level, have close ties within communities and possess particular expertise for moving discussions forward. The potential of peer-to-peer education and information is immense. The use of social media by girls to raise awareness about and stand-up against child marriage can be a powerful game changer. Investing at the grass-roots level in community youth movements and amplifying girls' voices was indicated as one of the most effective and underfunded strategies to bring about change. The need to scale-up existing initiatives in this regard was underlined.

26. Promoting accountability for the implementation of strategies to address child and forced marriage should be a priority, including through regular data collection to monitor

the impact of policies and plans. Independent national human rights institutions have an important role to play. Also, with adequate training and sensitization, parliamentarians can play an important role in monitoring progress and tracking resources. In this regard, it is critical to be clear on which aspects should be monitored. For instance, the focus should not be exclusively on whether marriage was delayed until after the age of 18, but rather on how the rights of girls and women have been upheld, and their choices expanded beyond marriage.

27. Experts agreed that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes important commitments to address child and forced marriage. To deliver on those commitments, implementation in line with the human rights framework and recommendations by human rights mechanisms will be fundamental.

IV. Impact of measures to address social norms that support child, early and forced marriage

28. Experts shared experiences in tackling stereotypes and social norms that support child and forced marriage. Among the norms that are most difficult to address are those related to children's sexuality and expectations of girls concerning their role as wives and mothers. The need to invest more in challenging perceptions around "morality" was stressed. Programmes aimed at addressing social norms should be evidence-based, scientifically accurate and contextualized.

29. Building movements of young people to transform social norms was a very successful strategy. Experience shows that peer-to-peer support, education and sensitization are critical to changing mindsets and reaching girls out of school.

30. Engaging schools, media and local artists are important strategies for providing alternative notions of what it means to be a girl or a woman. In turn, girls understand they can have aspirations and build the skills to realize their full potential. A campaign launched in Malawi and Zambia demonstrated the impact of good quality education for girls, presenting profiles of girls who had benefitted from the campaign as role models for the younger girls. Social norms critical of girls who are assertive must be countered, and girls should have opportunities to cultivate the skills they need to articulate and pursue their ambitions. Sport is an important avenue for girls to build life skills. In Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, football has been used to that end. In Bangladesh, efforts have been made to support girls to play in public spaces, searching to counter norms that limit their mobility once they reach puberty.

31. School debates on child marriage as a violation of child rights should take place in schools, youth clubs and other safe spaces as a means of raising awareness of young people.

32. Experience also shows the importance of working with "gate keepers", including mothers, fathers and other family members. It is important to be mindful of the fact that the narrative used about the risks of child marriage, often with a focus on violence and maternal mortality, does not necessarily correspond to the reality in which women live. Therefore, in order to discourage them from allowing their own daughters to marry, additional arguments should be used, including on the promises of education. Furthermore, community dialogues that dare to "speak the unspoken" are key to identify and amplify "deviant" voices in the communities concerning what is considered acceptable behaviour.

33. Public mobilization, including petitions or marches, are important to raise awareness and break taboos around child and forced marriage, as is training media actors on child protection and encouraging media coverage of stories of child and forced marriage. Promoting intergenerational dialogues through media, theatre and music has also proved successful.

34. Working with traditional leaders and enlisting their support against child and forced marriage is fundamental, as families and communities respect and listen to their views. A traditional leader, for example, explained how she had instructed other chiefs not to celebrate child marriage and how she had been successful in annulling over 1,500 child marriages and sending the girls back to school. From 2014 to 2017, the above-mentioned

African Union Campaign used traditional and religious leaders to prevent faith-based support to child marriage. During that time, community awareness campaigns led by chiefs entailed thousands of public declarations to stop celebrating child marriage.

35. Men and boys are also powerful actors of change. They have participated in advocacy campaigns in Brazil and Zambia to transform views on the practice of child marriage. Research has shown the need for the promotion of alternative models of masculinities. The experts stressed the need to work with fathers to change the understanding of what it means to "love" a daughter and encourage a shift in mindsets from "protecting her" to "empowering her". Deconstructing the meaning of protection and linking it to human rights is crucial for families and communities to challenge the idea, for example, that marriage is to protect girls' safety in contexts of insecurity and violence.

36. Efforts to address social norms must be grounded at the local level in order to strengthen credibility and to avoid perceptions around the imposition of foreign values. In order to counter possible backlashes resulting from efforts to dismantle harmful social norms, it is important to have a network of champions or supportive local influential figures.

37. While efforts to address social norms are critical, it is important to be mindful that understanding the socioeconomic dimensions of child and forced marriage is also fundamental. Continued discrimination on the basis of gender limits opportunities for women and girls and results in the notion that marriage is their best option. Efforts by communities, religious and traditional leaders and societies at large to address support for child and forced marriage must go hand in hand with efforts to expand opportunities for women and girls, ensuring the accessibility, quality and safety of education and the removal of legal, policy or economic obstacles to women's participation in the labour force. For example, a traditional leader stressed how she had enlisted support against child marriage from families by stressing how educated girls would be an asset for them. However, the support received is not sustainable if families do not have the resources to cover school fees, access to transportation to schools and assurances about safety within educational facilities. Measures to reduce the financial burden of unmarried girls on families living in poverty have also been successful, including by guaranteeing livelihoods of families provided that they keep their girls in school and/or delay marriage. In Brazil, the economic empowerment of pre-adolescents and adolescent girls has helped to prevent early pregnancies, which are a common reason for girls to get married or enter into informal unions.

38. The need was stressed to strengthen funding channels and mechanisms for long-term engagement at the grass-roots level.

V. Impact of protection measures

39. Experts agreed that the lack of adequate social and protective measures continued to be a reality in many high-prevalence countries. In some contexts, the services were so weak that victims considered remaining in a marriage as being their only option. For instance, where women and girls see no alternatives for survival, such as shelters or social security, and cannot rely on their families for support, they are left without the resources necessary to pursue a claim. Shelters are often not well located and in very poor conditions, and, in some countries, protection services are provided at the same institutions as the ones responsible for juvenile justice. At times, protection orders have resulted in the detention of girls and women victims of child and forced marriage. Costs relating to services were indicated as another important obstacle to their accessibility for many of the potential or actual victims.

40. There is a need to go beyond the specific legislation on child and forced marriage and use the full scope of available protection measures and mechanisms to provide assistance to potential and actual victims of child and forced marriage. This includes legislation on domestic violence, sexual violence or other specific forms of gender-based violence, as well as laws relating to the family. The mechanisms available in the different

pieces of legislation, such as protective orders, residence or custody orders, are often unknown by victims, or even the lawyers and activists who support them.

41. The combining of services was mentioned as a good way of combating stigma and ensuring adequate referral. In countries like Bangladesh, mobile legal services with paralegals have been set up to reach rural and remote areas. Innovative ways to provide information, for example, using smartphones, were also mentioned. Youth clubs established in 30 villages in Niger within the framework of the project entitled "Raise my voice" were also a successful example of how to raise awareness and provide information and referral to victims. National hotline services on violence against women or trafficking, linking women and girls to required services, have also proved to be critical for protection purposes. Helplines have, for example, been successfully used in countries such as Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, with the support of radio campaigns. Civil society organizations are deeply engaged in the development and implementation of some of these projects. Partnerships between Government and civil society to provide protection services are very important, as civil society organizations can promote the integration of some of the successful strategies into government policies.

42. Law enforcement, the judiciary, education and health-care providers are often influenced by harmful stereotypical perceptions and social norms, resulting in negligent or inadequate protection responses. For example, judges often take gender-blind decisions, leading to discrimination instead of using constitutional and other human rights guarantees to ensure the best possible protection for women and girls. Addressing stereotypical, judgmental attitudes should be a priority, through training, codes of conduct and the implementation of disciplinary measures. It was also stressed that access to protection and remedies can be influenced by the religion, ethnicity, disability or location of the victims. It was recalled that legislation often spells out general or specific duties for the police, health-care providers or other service providers.

43. The lack of accessible, good quality legal aid services is a concern in many high-prevalence countries. Often, girls and women are not given adequate advice on the remedies available. Monitoring service provision and ensuring transparency and accountability in interventions to prevent and respond to child marriage were stressed as critical. Again, the role of national human rights institutions was considered critical in this regard. The national human rights institution in Nepal has, for instance, launched a national inquiry programme on rape and child marriage and developed monitoring tools on child rights for the nine regions of the country. Civil society organizations also gave examples of initiatives to demand accountability, through monitoring and advocacy. Women's movements in Brazil, for example, have been devoting increased attention to the responses provided by the police and more broadly by the State to child marriage.

44. The need for greater focus on health and social services for girls who are already married was stressed, including the specific needs of minority communities in this regard. Efforts to ensure young married couples have access to services have led to a reduction of violence and increased use of family planning methods in countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda. The use of mobile telephones to provide information on sexual and reproductive health was referred to as a good example. Inadequate attention to the mental health of the victims was flagged as an important gap. The need for more research on successful exit strategies for girls and women in child and forced marriage was mentioned.

45. Further cooperation is required to ensure that protection orders against child and forced marriage issued in one country will apply in the country of origin of the girl or woman concerned or in a third country. The need was stressed for there to be more attention to conditions for recognizing foreign marriage.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

46. **The experts stressed the crucial need to recognize child and forced marriage as a human rights violation and manifestation of gender-based discrimination. In this regard, they recommended that measures be adopted to address comprehensively the drivers and causes that expose women and girls to the practice. This requires, inter**

alia, introducing and enforcing laws and policies that promote equality for women and girls and prohibit violence against them, as well as repealing discriminatory laws, laws that have a discriminatory impact and laws that enable harmful practices. It also requires the introduction of measures to promote women's control over their bodies and lives, including those that give them adequate access to education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, information and services. Women's equal rights with regard to employment also must be assured. There is a need to invest in women and girls as agents of change towards the eradication of child, early and forced marriage and other harmful practices and for the full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights. Interventions should be guided by the principles of the best interest of the child and non-discrimination, and should apply to all individuals and communities, without discrimination on the grounds of origin, ethnicity or social status. There was a call to recognize and prioritize the need to engage other sectors, such as gender affairs, child protection, education, health and justice, in global, regional and subregional responses to child and forced marriage.

47. In addition to the recommendations contained in sections II to V above, in the closing session experts recommended that the international community, States members of the United Nations, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders:

(a) Promote locally relevant, contextualized initiatives to eliminate child and forced marriage. These initiatives should be developed with the full and meaningful participation of local communities, including women and girls, religious and traditional leaders, teachers and others who have an influence in the matter;

(b) Ensure more regular independent and objective assessments of global, regional and national programmes with a view to learning from successes and failures and to documenting good practices. Women, girls and affected communities should be involved meaningfully in monitoring and evaluation processes. The impact assessments of initiatives should extend to the local level to ensure programmes respond to actual drivers and root causes of child and forced marriage and to the needs of women and girls;

(c) Provide increased support to the work of regional and subregional organizations to address child and forced marriage and opportunities to exchange lessons learned and good practices at the regional and subregional levels;

(d) Ensure greater financing of grass-roots initiatives to address child and forced marriage, particularly those amplifying the voice and agency of adolescent girls and young women. Such initiatives have an enormous potential to facilitate intergenerational dialogue and challenge the cultural norms that support harmful practices;

(e) Promote greater accountability at the international level for rights-based efforts to eliminate child and forced marriage, including through all relevant reporting mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the Universal Periodic Review. Strong linkages should be established between the work and recommendations of the United Nations human rights architecture, including the Human Rights Council and human rights mechanisms, and the implementation and monitoring of relevant goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5.3 to eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations;

(f) Strengthen efforts to ensure accountability at the national level, including monitoring and tracking funding for women's rights and child protection; ensure national human rights institutions have the mandate, resources and capacity to hold States accountable for addressing the practice adequately; strengthen the role of parliamentarians to monitor the implementation of policies and allocation of resources to eliminate child and forced marriage; and protect civil society space and support the engagement of civil society organizations in the area of child and forced marriage;

(g) **Ensure stronger investment in providing access to quality education for girls, including secondary education, including in situations of emergencies and displacement;**

(h) **Combine the prohibition of child and forced marriage with better services for actual and potential victims. Provide greater investment in the appropriate enforcement of legislation and protection and support measures, including legal aid for those affected by child and forced marriage, strengthened knowledge of the judiciary of the existing national and international framework to protect girls and women from child and forced marriage and measures on training, awareness-raising and accountability to ensure adequate responses. This should also include greater investment in ensuring the availability of adequate, child-friendly and gender-sensitive services and in building the capacities of all professionals that play a role in preventing child and forced marriage and protecting victims.**